

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 19637

EO 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEWT EGEN UR US
SUBJECT: SOVIET COMPLAINT ABOUT US TACTICS IN ECE

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET FOREIGN TRADE OFFICIAL COMPLAINED
TO EMBASSY E/C COUNSELOR ABOUT ALLEGED U.S. ACTIVITY
IN ECE EMBARRASSING TO USSR. IF THIS CONTINUES, HE
WARNED, SOVIETS WOULD INTRODUCE SOME OF THEIR BILATERAL
DIFFERENCES WITH US IN THIS FORUM.

2. DURING DECEMBER 16 LUNCHEON FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY
BELL OF USDA, SOVIET MINISTRY OF FOREIGN TRADE (MFT)
DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR AMERICAN COUNTRIES MELNIKOV RAISED
WITH EMBASSY E.C. COUNSELOR SUBJECT OF U.S. TACTICS
IN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE (ECE). MELNIKOV
EXPLAINED THAT ONE YEAR AGO HE HAD SUCCEEDED IN RESTRAINING
MFT INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS OFFICE WHICH HAD WANTED
TO TAKE A MORE AGGRESSIVE STANCE VERSUS U.S. IN ECE.
HE DECIDEDLY PREFERRED TO DISCUSS CONTENTIOUS ISSUES
BILATERALLY. NOW THE U.S. WAS RAISING ALL SORTS OF
PROBLEMS IN THE ECE, PARTICULARLY IN ONE PAPER WHICH
DESCRIBED IN CONSIDERABLE DETAIL SPECIFIC PROBLEMS
OF EAST-WEST ECONOMIC RELATIONSHIP, INCLUDING EXAMPLES
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OF SOVIET MISBEHAVIOUR. MELNIKOV SAID THAT IF THIS
IS WHAT THE U.S. WANTS, HE WILL HAVE TO REVIEW HIS
RECOMMENDATIONS, AND SOVIETS WILL THEN AIR BILATERAL
PROBLEMS WITH U.S. FOR OTHERS TO HEAR. THIS WAS NOT
COURSE USSR PREFERS, BUT IT WAS PREPARED TO RESPOND TO
US IN KIND.

3. COUNSELOR EXPLAINED THAT WE SET STORE BY ECE AS FORUM WITH EAST-WEST REPRESENTATION WHERE MULTILATERAL ISSUES OF MUTUAL INTEREST CAN BE DISCUSSED WITH RELATIVE OBJECTIVITY. WHILE NOT FAMILIAR WITH PAPER TO WHICH REFERENCE HAD BEEN MADE, HE ASSUMED PAPER MIGHT DEAL WITH TYPE OF MULTILATERAL AMELIORATIONS OF THE SORT FLOWING FROM INTERNATIONAL COMMITMENTS UNDERTAKEN AT HELSINKI. COUNSELOR AGREED THAT STRICTLY BILATERAL ISSUES SHOULD REMAIN SO. THIS RESPONSE DID NOT SATISFY MELNIKOV, WHO RECOMMENDED THAT EMBASSY OBTAIN THE PAPER IN QUESTION AND THAT THREAD OF OUR CONVERSATION NOT BE LOST.

4. ACTION REQUESTED: WE WOULD APPRECIATE IT IF US MISSION GENEVA OR DEPARTMENT COULD IDENTIFY AND PROVIDE US WITH PAPER TO WHICH MELNIKOV REFERRED AND COULD ADVISE OF ANY RECENT DISCUSSIONS IN ECE IN WHICH USSR MIGHT HAVE PERCEIVED SPECIAL EMBARRASSMENT.
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